

SARL NEWS SUNDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2013

You are listening to ZS6SRL, the official radio station of the South African Radio League, the national body for amateur radio in South Africa. The SARL broadcasts a news bulletin every Sunday at 08:15 CAT in Afrikaans and at 08:30 CAT in English. To listen to a web stream, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'Amateur Radio Today' and follow the links for details. For audio via Echolink, connect to ZS0JPL-R.

You can download this bulletin and previous ones from www.sarl.org.za and also subscribe there to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

Your newsreader this morning is (name and call sign), on 145,725 MHz from Pretoria, with a relay on 7,066 MHz SSB. (Other news readers change to suit).

IN THE NEWS TODAY:

ONE-YEAR LICENCE NOW DUE FOR RENEWAL MEGA CUBSAT LAUNCH INCLUDES TWO SATELLITES OF SPECIAL INTEREST NEW HAMNET PROJECTS

You are listening to ZS6SRL. Stay tuned for more details on these and other important and interesting items.

ONE-YEAR LICENCE NOW DUE FOR RENEWAL

ICASA has advised the SARL that persons who have a one-year amateur radio license should reapply before 31 December to renew. Regulation 9 stipulates that radio amateurs must reapply annually for a license renewal unless they opted for a multi-year license in which case they only need to reapply when their license expires.

ICASA will issue invoices for renewal during January. If you are a one-year license holder you must complete the new form B which is now available on the SARL website at www.sarl.org.za. Complete the form and send it by email to dkuhrau@icasa.org.za before 31 December 2013.

MEGA CUBSAT LAUNCH INCLUDES TWO SATELLITES OF SPECIAL INTEREST

On Thursday 21 November 2013 the French South African Institute of Technology (F'SATI), at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, made history by being the first in South Africa, and indeed the first in Africa, to launch a locally built nano satellite into orbit from a site in Russia.

Deon Coetzee, ZR1DE, who represented SA AMSAT at a ceremony held in the auditorium at the university campus reports that Vice Chancellor, Prof. Vuyisa Mazwi-Tonga, paid tribute to all at the university who made this achievement possible, and said she was immensely proud of being part of it all.

Original known as ZACube-1, the satellite has been named TshepisoSat, after a competition held for Grade 9 learners. Tshepiso is the seSotho word meaning

promise.

The launch was the culmination of five years' work after the first proposal to build a small satellite as part of the engineering curriculum was put forward by Professor Robert van Zyl in February 2008. Co-operation of the French Government made possible the forming of F'SATI and the French Ambassador in South Africa, Elizabeth Barbier, during a video address, promised continued support by France for the programme.

ZACUBE-1 was one of fourteen cubesats aboard the thirty metre tall, three stage rocket. All the cubesats were successfully released at a height of 600 km above the Earth. TshepisoSat will circle the Earth up to fifteen times per day in a polar orbit.

"At 11h13 the first signals from ZACUBE-1 were received amongst loud cheers", Deon said. According to Francois Visser, ZS1CED, who was the principal engineer and student mentor, the satellite was functioning well. The satellite also includes a small camera which will be used to monitor the releases of the 20 metre beacon antenna. The beacon will operate on 14 099 kHz and will be used to characterise the Superdarn antennas at the Antarctic which are used to study the ionosphere. A UHF beacon operates on 437,345 MHz. Follow progress at www.cput.ac.za/fsati and www.amsatsa.org.za

The second of the 14 CubeSats of interest to radio amateurs is FunCube. The satellite is an AMSATUK project built in conjunction with ISIS. The first signals from FunCube were received by Alan Soal, ZS1LS, about 10 minutes after separation, telemetry was successfully decoded, and uploaded to the FunCube data warehouse. All main parameters on FUNcube look nominal; temp, battery voltage, and solar panel charging rate. FunCube carries several interesting payloads and has already been given an OSCAR designation, Oscar-73. Follow FunCube on www.funcube.org.uk.

NEW HAMNET PROJECTS

Two projects were launched this week that will benefit Hamnet and the public in general in many ways.

Over the past few years Prof Kobus Botha's website www.weatherphotos.co.za an internationally known website for weather forecasting, measurements, and a host of important information related to weather and Hamnet have forged an excellent relationship.

For Hamnet, our main objective is emergency communication, as weather plays an important factor in most disasters across our country.

This week, a link to the Hamnet Facebook site was created by Kobus Botha on the abovementioned website. This means that followers of the website now have direct access to the Hamnet Facebook site. This creates a new outlet for the Hamnet site as viewers will be able to access our site for reports, photographs and other links related to disasters and weather!

The other benefit to Hamnet is that the general public who access our site, now have the opportunity to view the spectrum of not only our activities but also have the opportunity learn more about our involvement with emergency communication - locally and around the world.

It opens up a whole new window for viewers and members.

The other project which will see the light is a report from Hamnet Free State. Rickus de Lange, ZS4A, Provincial Director, has introduced a daily monitoring system in the 40 m band on the I.A.R.U Region One emergency frequency of 7,110 MHz

With the call ZS4DCC and manned by René, ZS4JC this frequency will be monitored on a daily basis from 07h00 to 15h30 excluding weekends. René also monitors all other Disaster Management radio's in the control room.

Rickus approached Mr Chris Helm, current Chairman of the Bethlehem Disaster Management Centre and offered him the services of Hamnet, explained the value of such a service to the community which was welcomed, especially in the mountainous regions with seasonal fires and snowfalls along the N3 and the N5.

The other benefit, and with Bethlehem being very centrally situated, René also has an added advantage of being able to monitor our emergency frequency which can be extremely useful during weather related emergencies and school holidays.

A protocol will be established with the station should an emergency call be heard and what procedures should be followed in such a case.

Thank you also to Rendal, ZS4RC who assisted with the erection of the station.

LEAGUE NEWS

BOOK NOW FOR THE SARL@HOME FOCUSING ON SURFACE MOUNT TECHNOLOGY

Book now for next SARL@home. Conquer your fear for projects using Surface Mount Technology. The project will be presented by Frik Wolff ZS6FZ at the SARL National Amateur Radio Centre on 30 November from 09:00 - 13:00.

Cost is R150 which includes a PC board and components to construct a very low power FM transmitter. Use it to relay your amateur radio audio around the house on a portable FM receiver or music from an iPod. The fee includes a CD with tutorials, circuits etc. Non Members pay a premium at R250.

Booking is essential and only 20 delegates can be accommodated. You will need to bring your own soldering station with a fine soldering bit, a tweezer, some hand tools and a magnifying glass. The SARL also has a special offer on a magnifying glass should you wish to buy one. Details are on the registration form which is available from the home page on www.sarl.org.za. You can also check the status of your booking. Bookings close on Thursday this week.

CALL FOR PAPERS AT THE 2014 RTA

The SARL has started planning for the 2014 RTA to be held all main centres starting in July next year. This is a call for papers to be presented at the RTA or to be included in the Symposium CD. If you have a subject that you would like to present at all RTA's or just at your local one, please send a synopsis by not later than 15 December 2013 to rta@sarl.org.za. Please include your contact details.

CLUB NEWS

MIDLANDS AMATEUR RADIO CLUB 6M CROSSBAND REPEATER

The Midlands Amateur Radio Club have just completed installing a 6m cross-band repeater. This is a very unusual development for Amateur Radio in South Africa and the results are going to be interesting. Please monitor and transmit on this frequency. Signal reports or comments can be sent to admin@marc.org.za

The repeater operates on 50.550MHz FM Simplex and a 88.5Hz tone is required. Any activity on our vhf/uhf repeaters will go out on 50,550. Voice time announcements are made every hour on the hour. If you trigger this 6m repeater, Sunday 08:00 is our weekly club net, Sunday 09:00 - 10:00 ZS0JPL-R SwapShop and Monday 20:00 Amateur Radio Newsline.

The repeater controller hardware is a RTCM, the software is AllStar (a HAM version of Asterix PABX VoIP software)

All thanks to Shaun Rudling (ZR5S) for a job well done!!

COMPETITION NEWS

RADAR CONTEST RESULTS - NOVEMBER 2013

RaDAR - Daring to be different! It's really awesome to see what Lucy, M6ECG, has achieved.

Sadly, RaDARers in South Africa are slowly fading, not that they think RaDAR is a bad idea it's just they seem to have lost interest? RaDAR has quite a history in South Africa starting as "Shack in a sack" (SiaS) years ago. There were around 90 participants then! This year only four logs were submitted. Much publicity was given!

RaDAR really matured in 2013 having a uniqueness and has been further refined for 2014 to include the inter national ham radio community. RaDAR is a challenge like no other contest. The contest is simply a test on what hams practice regularly.

The following four logs were submitted for Region 1:

Dick ZS6RSH - RaDAR Field station, QRP = 60 Points Theunis ZS2EC - RaDAR Fixed station, 100W = 16 Points Eddie ZS6BNE - RaDAR on foot, QRP, Digital = (points not available) Lucy M6ECG - RaDAR on foot, 10W = 96 Points

Congratulations to Lucy for winning the contest!

HF PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that after an exciting week of high sunspot numbers the solar activity is declining to more moderate levels. None of the Earth facing sunspot groups is producing strong flares.

If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around 72.

All the bands from 20 to 10 m will provide lots of DX fun with 15 m providing the best openings with 20 m not far behind. Early evening 6 m openings will however be much less common.

Please visit the new website spaceweather.sansa.org.za for further information.

DIARY OF EVENTS

25 November - Last day to submit logs for the National Field Day
30 November - High Altitude Balloon launch from Klerksdorp airport between 06:00 and 08:00.
30 November - SARL@Home at the National Amateur Radio Centre.
31 December - Last day to submit amateur radio video
28 February 2014 - Closing date for Youth Essay Competition.

SARL News invites clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and short-wave listeners. Submit news items - if possible in both English and Afrikaans to www.sarl.org.za/newsinbox.asp, not later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

The SARL invites you to listen to Amateur Radio Today every Sunday morning at 10:00 CAT on 145,750 MHz in the Pretoria area, with relays on 7 082, 7 205, and 17 760 kHz. There is also a podcast by ZS6RO. For a web-stream and Echolink by ZS6FCS, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'Amateur Radio Today', go down the green column and click on 'LISTEN ON THE WEB'. A repeat transmission can be heard on Mondays at 16:30 UTC on 4 895 kHz. The website also lists various other retransmissions. Reception reports, comments and suggestions are invited. Send an email to artoday@sarl.org.za. Sentech sponsors the transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a bulletin of the South African Radio League compiled and edited by Louis Kirstein, ZS1LK.

Thank you for listening, 73.

/EX